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MODERN DANCES

BY

RT. REV. MGR. DON LUIGI SATORI.

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† HERMAN J. ALERDING, D. D.,

Bishop of Fort Wayne.

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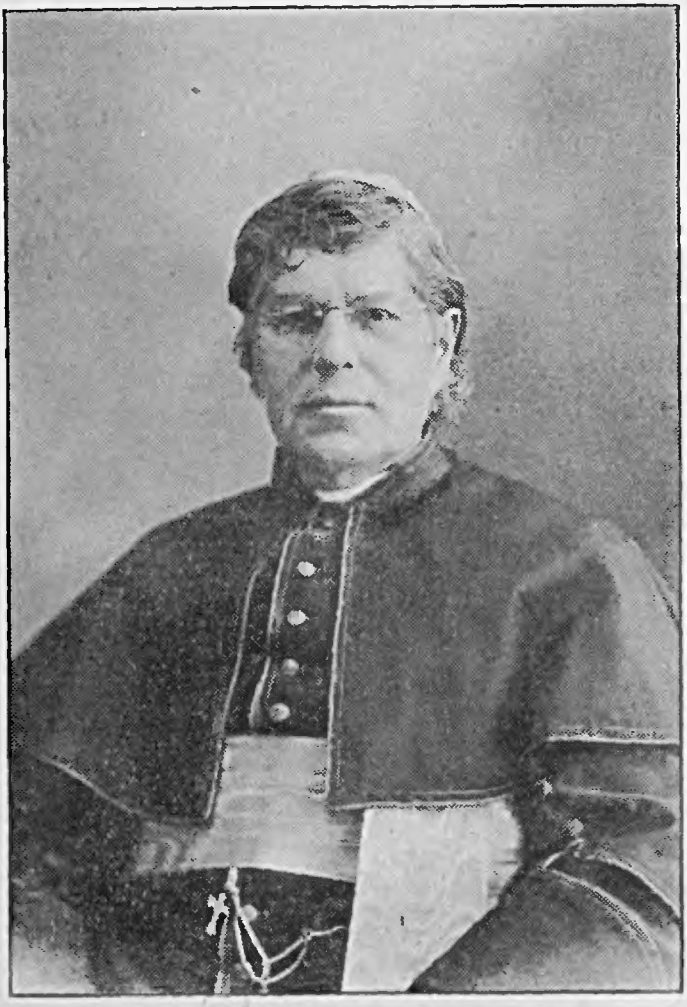

Rt. Rev. Mgr. Don Luigi Satori,
Domestic Prelate of His Holiness Pius X.

Preface.

The object of this short treatise on Modern Dances is to help in extirpating one of the modern evils. There are many evils that tend to undermine and destroy the virtue of chastity, such as obscene literature, the stage etc., but I deem one a principal, *i. e.* dancing of any kind comprehending square dances, which in some respects are worse than round dances. In my experience in the ministry for over thirty years I have discovered the evil tendency of the prastice in the hearts of the young people, rendering them callous to Catholic duties, undermining modesty, which ought to be the distinct virtue of the young, especially of the young maid. I have seen the consequences of such an evil, and I became fully convinced that it brings ruin to an enormous number of young people. In fact, dancing of any kind is to-day one of the greatest evils in the United States. Young men and young women are rushing like maniacs to such a sinful diversion, which becomes a fierce torrent tearing away all kinds of embankments, which the priests of God have endeavored to erect with great labor, to check its mad rage.

TO THE READER.

In the book of Wisdom God extols the virtue of chastity in the following beautiful words: "O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory; for the memory thereof is immortal; because it is known both with God and with men. When it is present they imitate it; and they desire it when it hath withdrawn itself, and it triumpheth crowned for ever, winning the renown of undefiled conflicts." Wis. 4:1, 2.

Our dear Lord, Jesus, said of the same virtue: "Blessed are the clean of heart; for they shall see God." Math. 5:8.

Beauty, immortality of glory, triumphant victory and the possession of God are the everlasting inheritance of chaste souls. God is the lover of chaste souls. But in the same measure in which God loves the chaste does He abominate impure souls. God despises, hates and terribly punishes the sin of impurity. He sent the deluge in consequence of the sins of the flesh, and with fire and brimstone He visited the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha, whose inhabitants were steeped in lust and impurity. Twenty-four thousand Israelites were slain upon the command of God, because these people had sinned by committing fornication.

For very grave reasons does St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, warn every Christian: "Dearly

beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, to refrain yourselves from carnal desires which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11. We beseech you as strangers and pilgrims to preserve the greatest adornment of your immortal soul, holy chastity. To do this prudently you must avoid the wilful proximate occasions and dangers of impurity.

The object of the following pages is to warn you against one predominant wilful danger, against Modern Dances. That the Modern Dances are wilful occasions of sin and in many instances impurity itself is known to all such Christians as are familiar with these dances and whose conscience is not entirely drowned by habitual flagrant immorality.

Your own sense of christian propriety tells you that Modern Dances, in close embrace of a person of the opposite sex, are not becoming in the sight of God, in whose omnipresence we live and move and are. You would not like to die on the dancing floor. Deep within your own heart there is a voice that tells you, no matter what other people say, that whirling around on the dancing floor with a person of the opposite sex, is not pleasing to almighty God, neither in harmony with the example of self-denial set by our divine model Jesus Christ. Your conscience tells you that Modern Dances are an abomination in the sight of God.

Now peruse the following pages on Modern Dances. In simple language they contain a lesson which God teaches us through his immaculate

Church, that if you wish to preserve holy purity, you must avoid the wilful proximate occasion to impurity and all immodest acts, especially Modern Dances. As the poet so beautifully said:

"And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire."

ANCIENT AND SCRIPTURAL DANCES.

Ancient and scriptural dances did not demand close contact between the male and female. They were more or less of a religious character. There can be no doubt that as time went on, abuses crept into such dances, as is evident from the Greek bacchanalian and the Roman saturnalia dances.

Dancing is of very ancient origin. The Egyptians danced to show graceful gestures and attitudes. They danced in their temples in honor of their gods, and their dances consisted of mysterious imitations of the celestial movements and of the harmony of the universe. The Greeks in the beginning connected dancing with nearly every religious ceremony. Their dancing was a gymnastic and military as well as a mimetic and religious exercise. The Romans did more or less the same.

It is wrong in some Bible Histories to represent Moses, full of indignation, smashing the tables of the law in sight of dancers in close bodily contact around the golden calf. The position is exactly that of modern dancing. The idea of Waltzes in Moses' time! There is certainly nothing in the biblical or even oriental archaeology to justify the assumption that the Hebrews ever indulged in so-called "round dances" in which men and women come into close contact. Such dances were unknown then, as they are still unknown among orientals. In the East, young men and young women

then, as now, were wont to dance separately—the men together and the women also by themselves. Even persons of the same sex rarely touched each other except with the hand. The Hebrew word for dances means "leap for joy." Both sexes bore a part in the dances they introduced into their solemn festivities, but they always remained in separate companies.

All savages down to the present time, as seen at the World's Fair, Chicago, in 1893, have indulged in dancing singly, and the dance was of a martial character in connection with their warfare and victories.

The American aborigines danced in their religious celebrations. Their descendants among the Sioux imitated, at the Pan-American Exposition, Buffalo, 1901, the ancient Scalp Dance around the scalps brought back by a war party. They danced in a circle, with their heads adorned with ostrich feathers, laughing, yelling, brandishing their weapons, boasting their prowess, distorting their faces, and imitating all the fury of battle. In such dances the young women assisted by joining in the chorus or by standing in the centre of the ring; but they were rarely permitted to join, even singly, in the dance.

The savages of the South Sea Islands, exhibited at the World's Fair, Chicago, performed the same kind of dances, but did not perform modern dances like those of the savages of so-called modern civilization.

When Christianity supplanted Paganism, it found many objectionable practices and customs which

it had to eradicate. One was dancing, which was usually connected with religious festivals. History records the fourteenth century "dance of death"—the mediaeval dance with the skeleton form of death which was supposed to lead dancers to the grave.

INTRODUCTION OF MODERN DANCES.

Before quoting the authority of the saintly Fathers of the Church against modern dances, it would be well to preface a remark. The objectionable Waltz, which is at the head of modern dancing, was introduced by the triumphal soldiers of Napoleon I. after his return from Germany after the grand encounter at Austerlitz, in which three of the greatest armies of Europe, each commanded by an Emperor, were signally defeated on December 2nd, 1805. The "Gallopade," or "Gallop," the "Polka" or "Polk," the "Mazourka," the "Redowa," and the "Cracowiak" came from Hungary and the Slavic countries, and were introduced into France probably in 1830. The above modern dances were introduced into this country some years later. The "Dip," the "Glide," the "Saratoga," and the "German" made their debut in 1876 or thereabouts.

MODERN DANCES.

Dancing in course of time assumed sinful features. Men and women began to dance together yet without close contact. This diversion, though dangerous, could be indulged in with propriety. Soon, however, it became an abuse and an incentive to the most dangerous of all passions, by inducing lewd songs, immodest dress, movements and gestures which shocked modesty. The so-called "Round" dances of the day are an abomination in the sight of God, and the "Square" dances as carried out in our times embody sinful features of the round dance. For this reason upright men stigmatize the Waltz in its various phases of "Dip," "Saratoga," etc., as the abomination of the day. But it is above all the Church of Christ which has received from the divine founder the commission to teach all nations to raise her warning voice wherever she sees her children in danger. It is this Church which must teach what actions fall under the ban of God's Commandments, i. e., what is and what is not a sin. It is the representative of God on earth and has authority from Him to explain to us God's commandments. By the Sixth Commandment God forbids adultery, and the Church tells us what specific sins are embraced in this general command. She says that all sins of impurity are forbidden, such as unchaste thoughts, looks, words, jests, and whatever violates modesty and leads to impurity. No sin is more shameful and none is followed by such dreadful consequences as the sin of impurity. The Church teaches us to avoid curiosity of the eyes,

vanity, immodesty in dress, indecent dances, to guard against familiarity with the opposite sex. Familiarity breeds contempt and frequently sin.

With Christianity, therefore, we condemn dances which demand close bodily contact between man and woman. On this very important question we will quote only a few modern theologians; because, as a rule, they found their opinions on whatever school they may follow. They quote the opinions of the leaders of such schools, and in consequence give only opinions which had a bearing on the old-time dances and the dances which could be, and no doubt were, performed in a very modest manner. This may be said to be the reason why the old school theologians wrote pages and pages on probabilism which has no practical bearing on the round dances of our day. We never find the theologians who ex professo treat the question of round dancing.

Modern dances should be judged from the practical knowledge and personal experience of laymen—men moved by the grace of God to state the truth, men who know positively whereof they speak. The holy Fathers and the Bishops who have condemned modern dances have learned the truth about the evil nature of such dances from the laity; and clergymen ought to learn the same truth from that source.

We have seen at different times and in many places, particularly at Summer resorts, full-dress balls which, in reality, were hardly half-dressed balls when one considers the flimsy and oftentimes scanty attire of the women. We contend that ministers of the Gospel are at times justified in seeing, albeit with secret indignation, and at the same time without giving scandal, some of the public evils of dancing. Particularly is this the case in country hotels during vacation time, when it is next to impossible to pass by the parlor in the evening without seeing men and women whirling each other about furiously in the mazes of the seductive dance. And how can they witness such disgraceful scenes without burning with secret indignation? And how can they, whose very life is pledged to the cause of Christ, remain silent when they see souls which have been entrusted to their care being lured to destruction by the sinful pleasures of the ballroom?

Mr. W. C. Wilkinson, who published in one of the American Quarterly Reviews an article on "The Dance of Modern Society," says: "The Dance consists substantially of a system of means contrived with more than human ingenuity to excite the instinct of sex to action, however subtle and disguised at the moment, in its sequel to the most bestial and degrading."

Gail Hamilton, in an Eastern journal, says: "The thing in its very nature is unclean and cannot be washed. The very pose of the parties suggests impurity."

Mr. T. A. Faulkner, ex-dancing master and practical authority on modern dances and the author of a convincing booklet, "From the Ballroom to Hell," edited in 1894, describes the position assumed in waltzing according to the rules of modern dancing. The following is his description of the sinful pose: "A beautiful girl, pure and innocent, the only remaining treasure of wealthy parents, is presented to a dancing master to learn the fashionable modern dances according to their well-established rules. At first she seems shocked at the manner in which he embraces her to teach her the latest Waltz. It is her first experience in the arms of a strange man, with his limbs pressed to hers; and in her natural modesty she shrinks from so familiar a touch. It brings a bright blush of indignation to her cheeks, and she thinks what an unladylike and indecent position to assume with a man who but a few hours before was an utter stranger. But she says to herself, 'This is the position everyone must take who learns to dance in the most approved style —church-members and all, so of course, it is no harm for me.' She thus takes the first step, casting aside that delicate God-given instinct which should be the guide of every pure woman in such matters." The ex-dancing master adds that at the end of three months this very girl was ruined.

The rule of modern dances is close contact between male and female in order to dance well. The same authority says, "It is a horrible fact, but a fact nevertheless, that it is absolutely necessary that a woman shall be able and willing

to reciprocate the feelings of her partner before she can graduate as a perfect dancer, so that even if it be allowed that a woman may waltz virtuously she cannot in that case waltz well. And it matters not how perfectly she knows and takes her steps; she must yield herself entirely to her partner's embrace and also to his motions. Until a girl can and will do this, she is regarded as a 'scrub' by the male experts." How can a decent man or woman reconcile such a diabolical doctrine with the Sixth Commandment as explained above? Christianity often quotes the following words of Christ: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." (Matt. xvi. 24.) And from this sublime utterance she has learned the true spirit of mortification which is opposed to that doctrine, which gives full scope to the inordinate passions and inclinations of modern dancers, who will not hear of mortification of the flesh, of self-denial, or of carrying one's cross after Christ.

Consider the immodest pose taken in the Waltz, and if you are not already blinded by lust, you will have to admit that it is a direct violation of the Sixth Commandment and diametrically opposed to the teachings of Christ and His immaculate Church.

You cannot argue that modern dances are in themselves "indifferent actions," but must admit that they are positive sins. Listen to Mrs. Sherwood, who is considered a standard authority on social usages. She writes: "No gentleman in greeting a lady will hold her hand a moment longer

than necessary." What decent woman would so far violate the teachings of the Sixth Commandment as to throw herself into the arms of a strange man? Would a lady with a spark of self-respect, in any place except in a ballroom or some other such place lay her head upon the shoulder of a man, place her breast against his, and allow him to encircle her waist with his arms, place his foot between her feet, and clasp her hand in his?

St. Jerome, in his book against Vigilantius who criticised the Saint because he lived a life of retirement said, "Fateor imbecillitatem meam," i. e., I confess my frailty. In recounting the possible occasions of sin, he mentions as a probable one the danger of being attracted by a worldly woman who might allure a man to sinful embraces. If the Saint feared the gaze of an attractive worldly woman and felt that he could not resist even such remote temptation, how, it may be asked, can young men and young women, dancing with partners of the opposite sex, promise themselves immunity from sin? Do they not place themselves in a very proximate occasion of sin, or, rather, do they not rush blindly into sin itself by engaging in the illicit embrace so graphically described by the ex-dancing master above quoted?

Jerome was a man of extraordinary austerities, practised day and night, reducing his body to a perfect skeleton, a man of constant mental and vocal prayer, a man who must have subdued all his passions to the spirit. His diffidence referred only to himself, fearing that he might not employ the grace of God for his final per-

severance. His diffidence was founded on his great humility, which urged him to be daily more and more watchful for his eternal salvation.

Note the great contrast between this great Saint of God and these presumptuous dancers. Theirs is certainly a case of

"Fools rush in
Where angels fear to tread."

We cannot believe in the assertions of modern dancers that round dancing is not for them an occasion of sin. Surely God will not protect those who willingly plunge into proximate occasion of sin. We know that we have to fight interior and exterior enemies—the world, the flesh and the devil. The ballroom may be said to represent all three. The habitues of the ballroom are, as a general rule, weak spiritually, and of their own strength are not able to resist temptation. They are like reeds which bend to the ground with every wind that blows, and the grace of God will not come to their assistance while they hug each other in the voluptuous Waltz. And carrying our argument still further, we would ask what do the dancing masters mean by "reciprocity of feeling and emotion by male and female partners engaged in the Waltz?" They mean nothing else but enjoying the natural pleasures of the flesh coming from such close contact of their bodies. They speak from experience. They lay down real facts.

We believe they state the truth. Modern dancers are convinced in their hearts of this truth whether they acknowledge it or not. We do not

believe girls or young men whenever they claim that they do not experience improper feelings or emotions while engaged in the Waltz. Moreover, this class of dancers comprehends or embraces, as a rule, the young men and women who are vigorous and passionate. They are lovers, admirers of the opposite sex, handsome young men, pretty young women—all eager for attraction. Why do they indulge in round dancing? We say it is for the gratification of their passions. Would young men and young women care to dance for hours and hours with partners of the same sex? What they want is close corporal contact for pleasure. This explains the fury with which people rush to the ballroom for the modern dances that afford them such great pleasure. But in the name of God, we ask how can young persons share carnal feelings or emotions and continually arouse them by assuming the Waltz position, going backward and forward, receding and rotating, and always in close embrace as though they were spitted on the same bodkin and still claim that they do not commit sin? Is such conduct decent or indecent? We declare that such an action is a breach of the Sixth Commandment, which says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and also comes under the condemnation of Christ, who said, "But I say to you, that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." St. Matthew v. 28.

It is justice unto God that our souls should rule over the body and sensual motions and lust. This

dominion is demanded by the Creator and hence justly due to the soul, because the soul is the superior part of man. "Let not sin reign therefore "in your mortal body so as to obey the lust thereof "Neither yield ye your members as instruments "of iniquity unto sin: but present yourselves to "God, as those that are alive from the dead and "your members as instruments of justice unto "God." (Rom. vi. 12-13.)

SINFUL MODERN SQUARE DANCES.

Modern square dances are no longer left as a refuge for the more modest dancers. Young men and young women are eager for the pleasure of the sexual contact. For this reason the Waltz is inseparably wedded to the quadrille. If one speaks against dances he will be told that square dances are allowed, and that "all the societies have them." Only an indecent girl or young man would give utterance to such words.

Modern square dances contain a great deal of the indelicate French dance of the eighteenth century, called the "Branle," consisting of several persons joining hands, leaping in circles and keeping each other in continual motion. They include, to a certain extent, the immodest Spanish "Pavane," in which the performers look maliciously at each other, strutting like peacocks, fluttering, fondling, cooing and wooing, approaching and retreating and imitating something in the animal kingdom, until at last, tired of the contest, and from a certain distance, both parties rush like maniacs to the

wild close embrace for which they were fully prepared. To some extent they imitate the lecherous Satyrs and deliriously lustful Bacchantes, whom history describes as frolicsome and addicted to various shameful kinds of sensual enjoyment.

A quadrille is called. A silly girl says "nobody objects to this. It is a square dance." But watch the partners taking their places. Hear the leader call out, "First couple forward. Cross over. Change partners. Waltz up and down the center. Change over." Note with what eagerness they embrace each other. "All hands waltz around the outside." And before they realize it they are lost in the Waltz-quadrille—women so closely united with men that they can hardly be separated, undulating, swaying and whirling, keeping time with the delirious melody of the musical instruments. Two souls with a single thought; two hearts that beat as one.

We claim that the modern so-called square dances have a feature which renders them worse than the Waltz in at least one respect, namely, the malicious preparation to enjoy the mad rush to a close embrace, and the impudence of the woman offering her body in the Waltz to all dancers, refusing none, howsoever degraded, syphilistic, foul, drunken and shameless he may be. Modern square dances must be condemned not only for the pleasure which comes from this close contact, but also because they are misnamed so that they may deceive some by covering the filth of round dancing.

MODERN DANCES UNKNOWN TO THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH AND ANCIENT THEOLOGIANS.

The saintly Fathers of the Church, as well as the theologians who wrote on dancing previous to the beginning of the nineteenth century, were not aware of the abomination of the modern dances and had in mind only square dances which did not demand bodily contact between the sexes, and they thought that such dances could possibly be performed without sin, though they were dangerous.

Benedict XIV., A. D., 1758, records the unanimous sentiment of theologians, which is that the saintly Fathers speak of those dances as leading to and involving sin. (Inst. 76, No. 3) We cannot find any contradiction between these theologians and the saintly Fathers, because the former wrote concerning the dances themselves in their movements, leaving out entirely the mode of performing them, which of course could be modest or immodest. They all agree, however, in stating the actual manner in which these dances are performed causes them to be a source of great danger. Hence the ancient theologians and the saintly Fathers who point out the dangers of these dances and their attendant evil consequences, are in substantial agreement. We claim, however, that the distinctions and sub-distinctions of those old theologians concerning dancing has no bearing

whatsoever on modern dances, especially the Waltz, because these dances, as now performed, were unknown to them. To refer the question of the immorality of modern dancing to the ancient Fathers is absurd in the extreme. Had the old theologians and the saintly Fathers known the dances as practised in our time, they would, no doubt, have hurled their anathemas at them and have declared them to be a flagrant violation of the Sixth Commandment.

MODERN DANCES ARE NOT INDIFFERENT ACTIONS.

The old theologians, with such knowledge, would not remain followers of the Scotus school, admitting individual indifferent actions, bearing on the serious question of modern dances. The reason is that, a man does something necessarily useful and becoming to rational nature, that is, to the soul or to the body, or he does something entirely useless and unbecoming. In the first case he does something leading to an end naturally good, and does a good action. In the second case he does something to rational nature—soul and body—unbecoming, or at least superfluous, for reason teaches that beings or things ought not to be multiplied without necessity or usefulness or some convenience. Moreover, reason dictates that human actions are done with deliberation and tend to a good or bad end, and therefore human actions are either good or bad and cannot be indifferent. Hence the old theologians, presuming, of course, they had a knowledge of mod-

ern dances, would be on this question thorough Thomists, never daring to call the pose taken in the Waltz, i. e., the close contact of male and female, an indifferent act, but would call it an outright sinful one. For if they agree with the saintly Fathers in saying that the dances of their time were full of danger in their execution, certainly those dances could not have been called good actions, and if they were not good actions they must have been bad ones. Therefore, with stronger reason, those saintly Fathers of the Catholic Church, had they had a knowledge of modern dancing, would have called them evil actions, i. e., sinful actions against the Sixth Commandment.

In this sense, therefore, we will be justified in quoting as authorities some of the saintly Fathers in condemning modern dances as sinful. We say Amen to their doctrine.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE FATHERS CONDEMNS MODERN DANCES.

St. Ambrose, who died on the fourth of April, A. D., 397, is one of the Fathers whom we may cite to corroborate our theory on modern dances. Although he lived in the early age of the Church, his spirit and his doctrine are still extant and may be said to bear strongly on the question of modern dances. In writing of the beheading of John the Baptist, he says, "Salome, the daughter of Herodias, pleased Herod by dancing in so much that he promised her, with an oath, to grant her whatever she asked, though it might be a half

of his dominions. Her mother, devoured as she was by lust, instructed her to demand the head of the prisoner, John the Baptist." From this incident, St. Ambrose and other saintly Fathers take occasion to show the dangerous consequences of a passion for dancing and the depravity from which it often takes its rise. The Saint says that scarce anything can be said more severe of a lady than to call her a dancer. He did not know the nature of modern dances, and had he known it what would he have said in condemnation of them?

St. Augustine, born at Sagaste, in his New Year's discourse, A. D., 398, preached a strong sermon against dances, and like St. Maximus of Turin in his fifth homily, preached about A. D., 645, vehemently denounces the evil, showing the contrast between dancers and pious people who follow Christ and lead a life according to the spirit of the Church and renounce whatever holds man wedded to the passions and to the world.

Even Sallust, a friend of Julius Caesar, says of Sempronia, a Roman lady, "that she dances too well for an honest woman."

Plutarch, who calls dancing a spur to lust, says that the first rape committed upon the famous Helena when she was carried by Theseus into Thrace was occasioned by her dancing with other maidens around the altar of Diana at Sparta.

The indecent dancing of Salome in the presence of lewd Herod produced the martyrdom of John the Baptist and resulted in many other crimes.

We may also quote St. Peter Chrysologos, who died at Imola, Italy, probably on the second day

of December, A. D., 450. His reputation as a preacher was such as to entitle him to the surname of "Chrysologos," which means "golden tongue." He was a thorough man of God, and manifested in his very eloquent sermons, as well as in his life, the true spirit of the Church which leads men to interior peace of the soul and fills them with God's holy grace. He is an example for imitation for those who would regulate and subdue their passions. The holy Bishop fasted and offered his tears to God for the sins of his people, whom he never ceased to teach both by force of his example and the eloquence of his words. When he entered on his charge he found that many abuses arising from Paganism had crept into his flock. One of the chief of these abuses was the furious manner of celebrating the New Year's Day by dancing. To the total extirpation of this evil the holy pastor devoted his time and his energy. In one of his noted sermons against dancing, he said, "He who will divert himself with the devil can never reign with Christ." (Sermon of Calendas.) And bear in mind that the dances of those days were not the abominations of modern dances; and the question naturally arises, how would the saintly Bishop condemn the dances of our day?

We will quote one more authority in the person of St. Charles Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, model of Bishops, and the restorer of ecclesiastical discipline. He was present at the opening of the Ecumenical Council of Trent in 1560. He quotes from Petrarch and calls the dances of his time a circle, the center of which is the devil. He

did not know about the vicious circles which our modern dances make, and we are sure that if he had he would have put a bigger devil inside those circles.

His condemnation is still in force, and bears strongly on the question.

To lessen the authority of the venerable Catholic Fathers of the Church on the subject of dancing, many affect to treat them as persons unacquainted with the world, and to call their morality, which is none other than that of the Church, too severe. The testimony of an abandoned character may perhaps have some weight with such persons. Roger de Rabutin, Count of Bussi, who lived many years in the French court, and who is well known as the author of several books of a loose moral character written in his youth, and is also well known for edifying repentance many years before his death, in his book on "The Use of Adversity," addressed to his children, cautions them in the strongest terms against a love of dancing, assuring them from his own experience that this diversion is dangerous to many people. He called dancing "dangerous" because he wrote in 1694 and the Waltz, etc., were not as yet known, otherwise he would have called this diversion "sinful." "A ball," he said, "is generally "a post too hot even for an anchorite. Dancing "may be done by aged persons without danger. "In such persons it would be ridiculous; and to "persons that are young, let custom say what it "will, it is dangerous. In a word, I aver that the "promiscuous ball is no place for the Christian."

MODERN THEOLOGIANS ON THE QUESTION.

It was not our intention to quote modern theologians on the question, because, as we stated when we described the sinful pose, we did not think we could find any. All Catholic theologians, as a rule, base their arguments on old dances which did not admit close bodily contact between the sexes. If these dances were performed modestly and without impure intentions, they were considered by those theologians to be lawful, but yet dangerous. This doctrine, however, has no bearing on the Waltz and other modern dances. Such a doctrine is calculated to mislead people. It is absurd to cite such a doctrine in defence of the modern ball, which excludes modesty entirely. It is wrong to say that modern dances are in themselves indifferent actions intended for joy and that they are not forbidden by any law. The present question is not of dancing in the abstract. Modern dancing does not exist in the abstract. It exists like most things in a certain way, and is a true, actual, concrete thing—a substance with ugly accidents, modes or manners, a social institution, well determined in form, with specific rules, demanding physical proximity and close contact between the sexes, and always inclining by further regulations to multiply opportunities for something more daring.

Modern theologians ought to base their opinions on the pose of modern dances and give their verdict before God on His holy law, otherwise

their authority as theologians would be **ignis fatuus,** simply nil.

Good Christians will never call the Waltz, the Polka, the Mazourka, the Redowa, the Dip, the Glide, the Saratoga, the German, etc., etc., "dangerous," but in regard to the pose assumed in these dances they claim it to be sinful and as such never to be tolerated. They have a right for such opinion, and to be adherent to the realistic camp on this question.

Devout Christians hold round dancing to be immodest in general as well as in particular cases. We do not admit the possibility of round dancing at a distance. This could not be waltzing according to the exigencies and rules of waltzing, etc. In waltzing, bodily contact cannot be avoided. It would be presumption to assume the position of the Waltz and claim modesty and innocence. Men and women are not justified in exposing themselves to lust or to allure partners or onlookers to it. We think this doctrine is according to the teachings of Christ and His Church and her saintly Fathers.

Though it was not our intention, as we have said, to quote modern theologians, we cannot refrain from quoting Bouvier, Gury, Sabetti and Genicot, all theologians of recognized ability in the Roman Catholic Church. They all teach that round dancing should not be permitted. The weight of their authority may carry conviction to some who have charge of souls, especially Roman Catholic clergymen.

Bouvier says: **Interesse choreis graviter inhon-**

"estis ratione nuditatum, modi saltandi, verborum, "cantuum, gestuum est peccatum mortale: hinc "saltatio germanica, vulgo dicta 'Walse,' numquam "permitti potest."

The translation: "To be present at balls ser- "iously indecent by immodest dress, manner of "dancing, words, songs, jests is a mortal sin: "hence the German dance, vulgarly called Waltz, "can never be permitted." (J. B. Bouvier, Edit. 3 Mechelin iuxta 7 Ed. Cenomanensem. Cap. iv. art. iii. § iii., 1 page, 91.)

Gury, speaking of modern dances, says: "Chorae "inhonestae ratione nuditatum, modi saltandi, verb- "orum, gestuum, cantuum, sunt semper graviter "illicitae ut patet. Inter illas autem a pluribus "recensentur saltationes recentiores quae gallice "dicuntur: la Walse, la Polka, le Galop, et aliae istis "similes."

The translation: "It is evident that indecent "balls by reason of immodest dress or of the man- "ner of dancing, words, jests, songs are always "grievously illicit. Amongst such according to "many theologians must be numbered the modern "dances called in French, la Walse, la Palka, le "Galop and others of the same kind." (Gury I., No. 242. II. Ratisbona Edit. 4, 1868.)

Sabetti (1902), a well-known and a great theologian, states that some theologians called round dancing "very unlawful." Genicot's Moral Theology, published in 1898, mentions various theologians, who most severely condemned dances which admit close bodily contact between man and woman; and he says it is impossible to avoid a

grevious sin of lust while engaged in such dances. He corroborates the statement by the experience and evidence given by penitents.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN GENERAL AGAINST MODERN DANCES.

In the history of the Roman Catholic Church, we find that Bishops entrusted with the care of saving souls were very solicitous to eradicate the evil of dancing from their dioceses. The history of the early Church tells us that Bishops assembled in council and condemned vigorously the various dances of their day, especially the New Year's Day, the Twelfthtide, and Shrovetide dances inherited from the pagan Roman civilization. These dances were condemned by the councils of the Church, the most prominent of which was the Council of Tours, held in A. D., 567. It is true there were not round dances in those days, but we suppose that some of the dances were immodest, though not admitting the sinful pose of the present-day Waltz. The condemnation of these Bishops is still followed in the Church and is an argument against modern dancing, showing the spirit of the Church and her Bishops to be against such diversion, and we feel that were these noble men in our midst to-day, they would most emphatically cry out against the sinful practice as a de facto violation of the Sixth Commandment.

Priests are impressed by Benedict XIV.'s magnificent treatise on the Diocesan Synod, of which

it has been said that it should be the manual of Bishops. The true spirit of the Church eradicating abuses is found in that treatise. This great Pope saw the evil of dancing. With fiery words he pronounced balls in general to be filthy amusements. (L. XI. c. 10, No. 11.) See also Bouvier quoting him. (Vol. IV, p. 100, Edition 1868.) We are sure that no conscientious Bishop would approve filthy amusements for his flock. Benedict XIV lived in 1758. Had he lived in 1900 or thereabouts he would have been horrified at the immorality of the modern Waltz, and would in very deed have stigmatized it as the most vehement destroyer of morality.

THE FIRST AND SECOND BALTIMORE PLENARY COUNCIL AGAINST MODERN DANCES.

The Catholic Bishops of the United States were fully aware of the iniquity of modern dances introduced into this country from Germany for the corruption of society when they assembled in Baltimore in 1866 to hold the Second Plenary Council. They condemned most severely modern balls and recorded a special decree against them. (Decree 472.) They condemned them as immodest dances, which they said were increasing daily, and just now, are a perfect fury.

The Fathers certainly told the truth. Modern dances have been on the increase ever since they were introduced into this country. Dancing masters, our modern mephitic corrupters of youth, have invented more daring dances, alluring young people

to practise them because of their sensual fascination. Milwaukee, Wis., may be said to be the Germany of America. A few months ago, we read a special dispatch to the "Baltimore American," to the effect that the Dancing Masters' Association adopted the "Five-Step" and five other dances on June 12, 1902. The dances are "The Lyric," a Polka, submitted by H. L. Walker, of Buffalo; "The Pompadour," a Five-step Schottische, by Isidore Sampson; "The Delmar," a Redowa with a two-step combination, submitted by E. B. Gaynor, of Chicago; and "The Stirlings," by Austin McFaddin. This is the most complicated of any of the dances and is a combination of Minuet, Gavotte and Waltz. It is set to original music and the dancing masters say it is very attractive. Isidore Sampson also presented a children's dance, which he calls "The Eros." It is set to Mazourka music. The new dances were demonstrated before the association by their authors and were greatly admired by the teachers.

The Fathers declare such diversion to constitute an offense against God, society and the family. They included in their condemnation not only those who promote those dances, but also who encourage them by their presence. The Bishops did not refer their condemnation to the old-style square dances, which exclude bodily contact of the different sexes and which could be performed decently, but they condemned the Waltz and other modern dances which according to the code of corrupted modern society, demand close embrace.

The First Plenary Council of Baltimore (1852) protests against round dances especially, because they are highly indecent. The Second Plenary Council of Baltimore (1868) says: "We consider it to be our duty to warn our people against those amusements which may easily become to them an occasion of sin, and especially against those fashionable dances, which, as at present carried on, are revolting to every feeling of decency and propriety, and are fraught with the greatest dangers to morals." And to all those priests who have the care of souls, the same council, in its 472d decree, says: "Let them ATTACK and BOLDLY condemn immodest dances, which are becoming more and more common every day. Let them admonish the faithful how much they sin, not only against God, but against society, against their families and against themselves, who take part in these dances or at least seem to countenance them by their presence. Let them teach parents particularly of how grievious a judgment they become guilty if they expose their young sons and daughters to the danger of losing purity and innocence of mind by allowing them to be thus entrapped in the snares of the devil." This is the literal translation from the Latin text.

Soon after the council, Archbishop Martin John Spaulding enacted in the Diocesan Synod the following statute: "As the Fathers of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore, in their pastoral letter to the people, wholly condemned those dances which are commonly called Waltzes and round dances, we decree that they are not to be taught nor to

be tolerated in the colleges, academies and schools of the diocese, even for the sake of recreation among persons of the same sex."

If the Fathers of the First and Second Plenary Council of Baltimore call modern dances immodest, they are most emphatically so by reason of the pose. And if they are immodest they essentially constitute a violation against the Sixth Commandment. Parents mark well the above quoted words of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore. You are guilty of enormous sin by exposing your children, yet unconscious, to evil, to be entrapped by the meshes of the devil.

TESTIMONY OF THE LAITY.

We have no regard whatever for actual dancing masters, who are the cause of damning numberless souls. The social world, though corrupted, begins to show a little uneasiness concerning the downright impudence of modern dances and compels the hypocritical dancing masters of the present time to make a detrimental confession to their cause. The New York papers, September 15th, 1903, published that the local instructors in dancing have taken up seriously the movement for the reform of ballroom manners and the popular form of round dances. They might as well strive to reform Satan himself. We quote what they had said:

"The degeneracy was so marked, that something radical had to be done."

A well-known dancing master who was at a

summer resort this season (1903), stated as follows: "One evening, early in the season, the proprietor, after we had had some of the popular style of romping dances, spoke to a few of the young men and said he thought they ought to remember that it was just as incumbent on them to behave with circumspection and dignity in the ballroom as it was in all the other parts of the house."

The above forced statement is strengthening our position on the question of modern dances. We go further in this line of argument, quoting other laymen, who command more attention in the social world than those just mentioned. The testimony of these men, condemning modern dances, is of the greatest importance. Men and women of modern society are better acquainted with the evils of modern dancing than are most modern theologians. These members of society may be called "common sense theologians," and their opinions as such must of necessity carry very great weight. Some of these society people have witnessed dances both in the new world and in the old, and are very positive in their condemnation of some of the dances of modern society. Sermons and philippics from the pulpits of churches will have little or no effect on those for whom modern dancing has such a fascination, for the very good reason that they are seldom in the church to hear the sermons delivered. But when in books or in the public prints appears anything under the heading of dancing, they read it with the utmost avidity; and hence it would be well to

quote the opinions of some competent critics on this all-important subject.

Mr. N. Francis Cook, LL. D., the author of a work which has attracted general attention, entitled "Satan in Society," enters a plea for social purity. He says that dancing exerts a prodigious influence upon female morality, and says that attendance at balls should be forbidden fruit, prohibited as positively as strychnine or arsenic. (Chap. 2.)

Mr. William Herman, of San Francisco, the author of "The Dance of Death," published in 1877, says those are hypocrites who dare to defend modern dances by claiming that they are innocent recreation and healthful exercises, and who quote "Honi soit qui mal y pense." He declares that "round dancing" is but an open and shameful gratification of sensual desire and a cooler of burning lust. It is an actual realization of a certain physical ecstacy which no pure person should experience, save under the sanction of matrimony. * * * It is a profanation of our civilization, an indecent assault upon common sense." He once asked a lady in society to give her experience on waltzing. The lady said: "In the soft floating of the Waltz I found a strange pleasure, rather difficult to intelligibly describe. * * * Folded in his * * warm embrace, a sweet thrill would shake me from head to foot. * * * If my partner failed to arouse these, to me, most pleasurable sensations, I did not dance with him the second time." A little further on the same author states that the privileges of matri-

mony relieve the necessity claimed by worldings for the dance. Dancers, he said, when married, will be the first to proclaim their abhorence of dancing.

L. Vives writes: "Il faut bien dire que la danse est quasi le comble de tous vices; * * * c'est le commencement d'une ordure, laquelle je ne veux declarer. Pour parler rondement il m'est d'avis que c'est une maniere de toute villaine et barbare." We translate the above testimony thus: "It is right to say that the dance is the consummation of all vices; * * * it is the beginning of a filthiness which I do not intend to mention. To speak frankly, I think it a custom thoroughly villainous and barbarous."

Lord Byron was a very gifted author but a very dissolute man. He describes in shameful language the waltz, but in doing so he states nothing but the truth. I quote only a few lines in order that the reader may understand his idea of the infernal and ruinous fascination of a custom which is recognized and tolerated and even encouraged in the cities and towns throughout the country in this our day.

"Waltz—waltz alone, both legs and arms demands
Liberal of foot and lavish of her hands;
Hands which may freely range in public sight
Where ne'er before—but—pray 'put out the light.'"

We have positive facts to prove that lights were occasionally put out in localities where round dancing was held for the benefit of the Church.

"Seductive waltz, though on thy native shore,
Even Werter's self proclaimed thee half a whore."*
(A prostitute invented the Waltz.)

Prof. La Floris says that there are in San Francisco twenty-five hundred abandoned women, and three-fourths of these women were led to their downfall through the influence of dancing.

Ex-dancing Master T. A. Faulkner, who for several years held the championship of the Pacific Coast in fancy and round dancing, and was author of many of the round dances which are now the popular fads of the day, states that the most accomplished and most perfect dancers are to be found among abandoned women. And why? Because, he says, they are graduates of dancing schools. At Los Angeles, "The City of the Angels," he visited two hundred women in houses of ill-fame, and one hundred and sixty-three frankly told him that the direct cause of their downfall was the dancing school and the ballroom.

Governor Mickey, of Nebraska, is opposed to dancing on the following good grounds:

"I am opposed to dancing," he said, "on moral grounds. Liberties are permitted in the ballroom not tolerated elsewhere. Most of the disgraced women attribute their fall to dancing, for human vultures haunt ballrooms to presume upon acquaintances and ruin young women.

"The difference between the masculine and feminine code of morals is the cause of the sin and sorrow of the under world. A man may stray from the path of virtue and be respectable. Ev-

ery hand pushes a woman downward."—See Church Progress and Catholic World, St. Louis, Mo., November 21st, 1903.

The police courts of the various cities of the union seem to prove that many of the inmates of the brothels and houses of assignation have danced themselves into their unfortunate condition.

THE BALTIMORE AMERICAN.

The Baltimore American, in October, 1858, had a vigorous article against round dancing: It says:

"The Polkas, Schottisches, Redowas, Mazourkas, and the German are the round dances. Concerning them we wish to speak with the utmost plainness. We shall put the case strongly, but fairly. In them one of the party seizes the other closely, about the waist, and whirls her around the room. Her arm and head repose on the gentleman's shoulder, and her breast is pressed close to his breast. In this attitude they move through the mazes of the Waltz. But suddenly a Waltz ceases and a new and abominable series of movements begin. Hugging each other more tightly than ever, the gentleman backs the girl from one end of the room to the other, then the girl backs the gentleman, and they wiggle, they twist, they squirm, they bob up and down, they go through motions in the last degree objectionable, because of their indecency. All this time the pair do not relax their embrace; on the contrary, it is tightened; and so with heated blood, with panting breath, bosom heaving against bosom and limb

pressing against limb, the round dance is executed.

"Suppose that honest parents had never witnessed or heard of such performance, and saw for the first time their daughter engaged in it, the result would be that the person thus dancing with the young lady would receive the significant assurance that he was not a fit companion for virtuous women. And yet, nothing can induce many parents otherwise upright and moral, to forbid their children to indulge in the very same round dances, because they are fashionable. Parents take their daughters to the Virginia Spring, to Cape May, Saratoga, Newport, etc., etc., and see them night after night, locked fast in the embrace of men of whose character they know little, perhaps nothing, and smile at the disgusting exhibition. Nay it should be a source of extreme mortification if no one should ask Miss X. or Miss Z. to participate in the indelicate performance. Whenever you find people anxious to ape the fashion you will find their daughters indulging in the lascivious excitement of the round dances. Nay, worse than this, you will find people well educated and well bred who will not permit their own daughters to indulge in those dances, countenancing them by their presence and their tacit approval. And year after year the round dances continue to be practised in all fashionable places and circles, increasing more and more in freedom and license, until now there is scarcely any liberty a side-whiskered puppy may not take with a young lady, provided he does it in public. * * *

"The round dances exceed alike the limits of propriety and decency. Disgusting to those who look on, they are pernicious to those who engage in them. They are the contrivance of an impure ingenuity to excite the passions. They are a shame and a disgrace to the age."

Finally, we give the testimony of Mrs. Gen. Sherman. The lechery of the Waltz participated in by males and females is really shocking. The author of the "Dance of Death," to whom that lady refers, proves it strongly. He says: "Mark well the faces, the contortions of the body and limbs and be convinced against your will."

MRS. GEN. SHERMAN'S TWO LETTERS.

The following letter, says the San Francisco Alta California, is copied from the original letter in Mrs. Sherman's handwriting, which we have seen:

"Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, Aug. 21st, 1877.

"My Dear Mr. Rulofson:—I have read your book, "The Dance of Death." and I must say I admire your courage and believe you have shown as much heroism as any crowned martyr in your defense of virtue and your denunciation of what is so calculated to drive it from the hearts and minds of fashionable women. I have always given this miserable dance a silent condemnation, by refusing to allow any of my daughters to participate in it, under any circumstances, but I have avoided the evil as something at the sight of which my soul revolted, without being able to say anything against it either from experience or any

absolute knowledge of its most direct and pernicious effects.

"You have had the experience of the dance itself, and you have evidently had evidence of its most fatal results. From the published letter of Father Accolti lately sent to me, I infer that you are suffering the consequences of your heroism. I trust you will not be cast down nor allow yourself to suffer any pain at whatever may be said of you. Anything less than your declarations would have failed to produce any effect. Now it must cease. Women of virtue or self-respect will now blush to have the dance named to them. An amusement which leads, in any case, to such results as you have pointed out, should be forever discountenanced; even if they should continue it for a while in order to assert their own innocence and their non-concurrence in your views, they will only be too glad to let it die out.

"I am rejoiced that you have spoken boldly and told all you know about it. The advocates of this dance have had their own way long enough—absorbing all entertainments, sneering upon and ridiculing those who quietly decline to participate, openly and constantly insinuating of those who decline it that they are therefore evil-minded, etc., or quoting impudently and insinuating their only weapon, 'Honn soit qui mal y pense,' and then throwing themselves in men's arms to prove their own purity of mind! I never would have imagined the half of which you declare to be true, but I believe every word you write, as it explains many things

which I had observed without attempting to understand. One thing alone I shall mention: I have observed that those who enjoy this dance enjoy no other—that they are exhausted and miserable after indulging in it, and at the end of 'the season' they are broken down in health. All who have participated in it must feel greatly mortified and humiliated on reading your book, and many will be angry and bitterly denounce you; therefore I say I admire your courage, your heroism in defense of virtue, which is in danger of being entirely lost to society by reason of this bold dance. Let them suffer mortification! They have been ridiculing and scorning and slighting every modest and obedient girl who failed to participate with them, for these many years.

"I am sorry you could not give the name of the young lady whom you quote against the dance, because others will be accused; and ladies whose families, for generations, have strictly avoided such dances, would be sorry to be supposed to have had any experience, even at the price of being considered 'eminent and renowned.' I respect the lady, as I do you, for being willing to denounce this from her own experience. If consistent with your obligation toward her, I would be glad to know her name, which, of course, I would not even mention without your consent. Should you find the newspapers 'hounding' the wrong persons for this young lady, please give her name to the public, if she is still willing; at least describe her, so that she cannot be easily confounded with others.

"I have as yet received only the copy you sent, not the ones I ordered. With great admiration and regard. Very truly yours,

ELLEN E. SHERMAN."

"912 Garrison Ave, St. Louis, Mo., Oct. 19th, 1877.

"Mr. RULOFSON:

"Dear Sir:—I owe you an apology for my long silence. I am very much obliged for the two books received. I am deeply interested in the result of your book; the more so as I hear the wail that goes up from the wounded and the guilty: but as you strike to heal, the wail inspires neither awe nor sympathy. So many are implicated in this evil custom, either personally or in their daughters, sisters, or near relatives, that there are very few who are entirely disinterested, and, therefore, but few who can form an impartial judgment. Many editors are afraid to praise your book, and stationers to keep it; and many clergymen shrink from a public denunciation of the dance, because their direct personal appeals have been ineffectual to prevent their own relatives or the children of prominent parishioners, from joining in it. A verdict cannot be procured against polygamy in a community of polygamists. The anger and mortifications of our friends is natural, and not unexpected, but they have betrayed more malice than they were supposed to possess, since their only defense of their pet amusement is individual abuse. True, the dance admits of no rational defense, but they could personally plead

'not guilty' to pernicious effects, and each leave the verdict to time and a quiet examination of conscience. The Church has always condemned this kind of dance. The mildest of her saints (St. Francis de Sales) warns against such excesses, and Bishops of the United States in Council long since, earnestly exhorted Catholics to refrain from it. Parents are responsible for the defiance of all this authority; it is they who assume the risk for their children and themselves. It is not to be expected that young girls, who are unconscious of evil in the beginning should reflect long enough to summon the moral courage to resist the allurements of the dance, unless with encouragement and support of their parents. To the honor of pure maidenhood, be it said, however, that there are young girls who decline from instinctive delicacy, even when their parents would have them join the throng who dance down the broad road of worldly pleasure.

I take with a grain of allowance what I hear of a grand jury indicting you on account of your book, for even anger and revenge could not render men so unreasonable as to admit a prosecution for the description, while the dance is still permitted. Your opportunities for seeing and hearing the fatal results of this custom have been greater than mine. I have looked on (when compelled to see it) with abhorrence, but I have not cared to reflect what its precise results might be, nor to judge its effects beyond the utter physical prostration it produces, in its most innocent votaries, and the vitiation of their tastes for any

wholesome amusement. To that I can testfy. The very sight of it, when danced in the least harmful manner, forces upon the mind the conviction of all you state regarding its often serious results; but rather than abandon what all the Churches condemn, they slander and persecute the one who dares to raise a voice against it. But, as I said before, their side of the case admits of no other defense.

"It was not from any unwillingness to bear abuse that I hestitated to enter the lists against the dance. You know my reason. Now that my name has appeared, I would earnestly repel any suspicion of having ever participated, and guard the memory of my parents from the aspersion of having ever countenanced it. This was my sole motive in requesting the name of the lady who gave her experience. Persons who read the book before reading my letter supposed you referred to me, without reflecting that your complimentary description did not answer for me. How can those who claim to be innocent, say that **none** are guilty? If any are guilty (and who doubts it?) are not even the most innocent accessory to their sins? I hope you will send me whatever appears on this subject pro and con. I leave you to make whatever use of this letter you please. There is no doubt you have done a brave act, and that it will result in great good.

"I am, with sincere regard,

Very truly yours,

ELLEN EWING SHERMAN."

MOTHER, MY RUIN IS ACCOMPLISHED!

When the Prince of Wales, now King Edward VII., visited this county in 1860 during the administration of President Buchanan, at a great ball given in his honor he met a daughter of Mrs. Gen. Sherman and requested her to waltz with him, but she politely refused. After returning to England, the Prince forwarded to Miss Sherman an elegant souvenir addressed to the First Lady of the United States. The Prince was impressed by the modesty of the young lady, who probably was compelled by etiquette to be present.

A foreigner certainly cannot be impressed by modesty, at least, in a modern American ballroom. The French Government in 1902 sent to America the millioniare, M. Lazare Weiller, the Administrator of the General Telephone Department of France, to study the conditions of life. One evening he found himself seated at the opera in New York next a very charming and interesting young lady of the "Four Hundred." "Tell me, sir," she said, "what has most impressed you in American society?" With a certain amount of impudence he replied: "The absence of modesty." The young lady answered, "You are right in your statement, monsieur, we are not modest, because modesty is a degraded form of foolishness and in our character everything is true.

REFUTATION OF TWO ARGUMENTS USED IN DEFENSE OF MODERN DANCES.

It is quite natural that modern dancers should attempt a defense of their indulgence. The principal reasons given by them are: 1st, that we indulge in modern dances because they are physically and morally healthy, and moreover, they are a graceful exercise; 2nd, we practice these exercises because all people, both of high and humble society, practise them.

In proof of the arguments advanced, some dancers may say that a few months ago Yale College decided to teach dancing as a physical and a healthy exercise. But what kind of dancing has Yale decided to introduce? Is it the modern dancing, such as we have been condemning, or, on the contrary, is it not a dance such as would be required in the gymnastic work of the Freshman class of a modern college? Dr. William G. Anderson, the Physical Director of the Yale Gymnasium, is responsible for the introduction of these dances. He no doubt got his idea from reading of the exercises of the ancient Greeks—exercises which have been mentioned in this booklet when ancient dancing was described. The Freshman will be allowed to select dancing as one of the forms of exercise which they are required to take. Two evenings each week will be devoted to it. The lessons will be started with the Irish jigs, then the Irish tilt will be taken up, and finally clog and soft shoe dancing. As long as the Freshmen stick to these dances there can be no objection to such

exercises. It is a manly, hygienic exercise—one which builds up the human constitution both physically and mentally, and one in which the enervated effeminacy of some modern dancers is conspicuous by its absence.

Modern dancing, strictly so-called, i. e., the Waltz, etc., does not build up the physical constitution, but rather undermines it. The experience of the dancers themselves will bear out this statement. Who are those who attend the objectionable picnics, balls, dancing schools, etc? They are, as a rule, those who work hard for their living, and many of them are young men and young women in cities and in farming districts and in the mining regions, who are obliged to rise early. Is it a wholesome moral and physical exercise to dance in a stifling room or in the open air, in scanty attire, until one or two o'clock in the morning, and, after a few hours' rest, repair to work? The young women especially, who get in a perspiration during the dance, and as soon as it is over rush to a cool place or to an open door or window, with their arms and chests exposed and tight lacing and paper soled shoes, will find in such a transition of atmosphere nothing but evil hygienic effects. Nature fixes her own necessary penalties for violations of her laws—penalties which will be severe. Is there any wonder then that so many young women are nowadays consumptives? Physically and morally they are wrecks, and that too because of excessive indulgence in dancing.

Young men and young women may work sys-

tematically six days in the week and rise fresh every morning, but let them attend modern dances for only a few hours each evening and see what will happen. Health and vigor, both of mind and body will vanish like the dew before the sun. It is not the extraordinary exercise which harms the dancer, but rather the coming into such close contact with the opposite sex. It is the fury of lust craving incessantly for more pleasure that undermines the soul, the body, the sinews and nerves. Experience and statistics show beyond doubt that passionate excessive dancing girls can hardly reach twenty-five years of age and men thirty-one. Even if they should reach that age they will in most instances be broken in health physically and morally. This is the claim of prominent physicians in this country.

Healthy exercise indeed! What a lie! The Waltz, Polka, Gallop and other dances of the same kind are disastrous in their effects to both sexes. Yet the woman is the greater sufferer physically and morally, because what is fatal for a woman may be less fatal, to a certain extent, for a man. See the girl in the morning when seated at the breakfast table. She is broken down physically and morally, a used-up creature. The Waltz has painted those dark circles round her eyes and planted those wrinkles on her brow. She is paying for the "stolen waters." She is ill and peevish. Poor little thing. She has been working so hard for many nights! Modern dances are surely the most strenuous activity in all the range of social exertions!

According to the calculations of a London medical authority, the average Waltz takes dancers over three-quarters of a mile, and a square dance represents a distance of half a mile. This reckoning on the Two-step is not given, but it is reasonable to conclude that nearly a mile must be covered in one of these dances. An evening devoted to this form of enjoyment frequently includes as many as twenty dances, generally divided evenly between Waltzes and the Two-step. According to the statistics above quoted these dances would represent a distance of nearly eighteen miles, lengthened considerably by the usual encores and extras.

The New York American and Journal, Sunday, April 26th, 1903, states that a modern dancer dances thirty miles at the average ball. The writer says that a Waltz of average duration represents approximately a run of one thousand yards. This is the longest dance, with the exception of the Quadrilles, which, with its four figures, covers nearly one thousand, eight hundred yards. The Mazourka is only equivalent to about nine hundred yards, and the polka to eight hundred, while the lazy Pas de quarte, i. e., "Four-step," is barely seven hundred yards. Carrying his statistical ingenuity still further, he estimates that the usual series of dances at an ordinary ball, beginning at 10 P. M., and finishing at 5 A. M., represents no less than fifty-six thousand steps, equivalent to thirty miles on level ground. A mile is one thousand, seven hundred and sixty yards; and thirty miles will give fifty-two thousand, eight hundred yards. What a

physical, healthy exercise is this for one night's work!

We scorn the claim that the body of young men and women of birth should be formed by such reckless and indecent exercises to promote health and strength and contribute to give an easy, graceful mien and carriage and straight attitude, a firm and steady walk and a gentleness and politeness in behavior. Grace-giving, forsooth! The grace of the harlot or of the libertine is not the most desirable possession. Let society men and women learn from the best moral schools of physical culture, from moral galateos or books on etiquette or oratory the necessary rules to obtain ease, grace and effectiveness in posture, expression and gestures and surely they do not need to learn that art from immoral modern dances.

After all, the natural pose and gestures of the young are pleasing. We side with Sir Joshua Reynolds, who states that all the gestures of children are graceful, and that the "reign of distortion and unnatural attitudes commences with the introduction of the dancing master."

The pure, modest girl has acquired her natural, dignified, graceful and impressive noble bearing from the school of Christ, and is admired by all, for virtue attracts. Whereas the modern dancer, pert girl, has learned her impudent coquettish posing, step and lustful contortion from the school of Satan in a ballroom and she secretly is despised even by her ungodly fellow-dancers. Indeed the young dancers of to-day and especially the young women have not inherited much common sense!

SECOND OBJECTION REFUTED.

It is not logical to state that because modern dances are indulged in everywhere that they are lawful. It is true that modern dances are indulged in by a great multitude, including some of the more respectable members of society, but are these society people what might be termed the "best society" according to the teachings of Christ and His Church? Christian societies, which pretend to guard the interests of Christ and His Church, practise modern dancing, but not with His sanction or the sanction of His immaculate Church. Episcopalians, Methodist-Episcopals, Baptists, Presbyterians, and in fact those of every religious denomination, indulge in modern dances, but in doing so they are not acting in accordance with the teachings of their church, but rather against them. Members of many other churches also indulge in dancing, but they can hardly claim the sanction of their church for so doing. Even the Jews of our day practise modern round dancing, but they cannot claim the sanction of their ancient church in so doing, because it is a fact, easily authenticated, that the ancient Jews when dancing did not allow close bodily contact of the different sexes, and moreover, that they danced with those of their own sex. Because Christians and Jews in all countries indulge in modern dances it does not follow that such dances are strictly moral. Such dancers cannot be said to be representative church members. They might rather be said to be men and women who are acting contrary to the teaching of their church, con-

trary to the dictates of their conscience, and men and women of little hope of future salvation. Their hearts and affections seem to be centered on the things of this world. They seem to have no other desire than to have what is commonly called a "good time," to give full scope to their passions, to dread no vice that appears necessary for the gratification of their passions, and to be desirous for the accomplishment of their wicked designs. These are the people who engage in modern dances. But that such a large class of people engage in round dancing does not prove that round dances are moral. On the contrary, results prove very conclusively the immorality of modern dancing, all dicta to the contrary notwithstanding. The world is wicked. Modern dancers are worldings, although some of them may pretend to be pillars of their church. Pshaw! They are not. Christ, His Church, and the saintly Fathers do not agree with them on this question. Their conduct is nothing short of a rebellion against religion. It is a crying shame that Christian man or woman should rebel against the Saviour and His Church by indulging in round dancing, since round dancing is so explicitly forbidden by Christianity. It is a shame, yea, more, it is little less than sinful that pastors of churches should use means which are absolutely forbidden by the Church to raise money in the name of God. Woe to such abettors!

And you that abet him in this kind
Cherish rebellion, and are rebels all.
—SHAKESPEARE.

Our condemnation of modern dancing is as general as is the practice itself. To all who oppose Christianity, whether by dancing or by encouraging such a practice, we say with the Scripture that they are rebels and traitors: "Evil men and seducers grow worse and worse, erring and driving into error." (II Tim. iii. 13.) "Traitors, stubborn, puffed-up, and lovers of pleasures more than God." (II Tim. iii. 4.) To pastors who encourage such dances we would apply the words of the Prophet: "My people have been a lost flock. Their shepherds have caused them to go astray." These hirelings care nothing for the sheep. They are cowardly, self-interested hirelings. Yet Christ said, "the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep." (John x. 11.)

But though there are many practicing and abetting modern dances, let it be understood clearly that their conduct does not reflect the sentiment of any great part of the Christian world. In every walk of life men are to be found who, like ourselves, are convinced of the immorality of modern dances—men who would shrink from the danger of exposing their wives and daughters to the fatal allurements of the modern dance hall. They clearly see the evil, and condemn it most strongly.

They know that a daughter ought not to hunt a husband at a ballroom, nor should a son resort thither to choose a wife, because the place is nothing more or less than a great marketplace of beauty. They agree with Bulwer, who said, "For my part, were I a buyer, I should like making my purchases in a less public mart." They

know men who have been fond of dancing until they were married and after that danced at but rare intervals. And why not? Because such men recognize that a dance hall is a fit place good enough to procure a wife, but is not a fit place to which to take a wife. They know, with Samuel Butler, that modern dances "transform all wives to Delilahs." They know too that hugging other people's wives and daughters is an immoral action.

CONCLUSION.

We have quoted from the Fathers of the early Roman Catholic Church to prove that dancing even in their days was condemned by the Church. We have shown that the dances of the early age were not as immoral as those of the present day. For the Roman Catholics we have also quoted the modern theologians who say that round dancing cannot be indulged in without incurring the proximate danger of committing sin.

We have quoted extracts from the daily press which refute the claim that dancing may be indulged in because it is a simple and healthful exercise. These quotations show by figures that dancing, far from being a simple aud healthful exercise, is, on the contrary, a very severe strain on the nervous system.

Many a healthy young maiden is infested by a syphilistic young man on the dancing floor. Syphilistic germs effect both men and women. Dances breed diseases, the most shameful.

We have also quoted the testimony of several modern dancing masters, and they certainly are very strong in their denunciation of the modern Waltz.

To our mind the letters of Mrs. Gen. Sherman cannot be refuted. They are in themselves a masterly arraignment against the modern dances.

The experience of conscientious and zealous priests and ministers who have charge of souls teaches them that dancing as carried on nowadays both in the private home and the public ballroom, the picnic ground and summer resorts, is sinful and leads to the commission of still more grievous mortal sin, and the practice is the beginning of the downfall of many who would otherwise be upright young men and women and ornaments of society.

Finally, we have said that dancing should be forbidden to all, both young and old. These lines were written to remind worldings of their iniquities, which shall call for heavenly vengeance. They know from experience the evil, and yet they must be told of it by some one whose duty it is to oppose it for the temporal and eternal welfare of those who engage in this sinful practice.

People who engage in round dancing cannot be and will not be scandalized by the plain utterances which we have used. Others who are not modern dancers, or are even ignorant of the present dancing evil, may derive some slight benefit by learning of the real nature of the evil, and may be warned by the reading of this book against taking a step which might finally lead to corrup-

tion. This plain statement of facts should not offend the natural delicacy of feeling of the upright young man or woman. The whole Scripture is full of exceptional plainness of speech, written with the express purpose of impressing the reader with the fact that there are certain actions which God can never tolerate. They ought to know that the truth must be told sometimes in order to unmask the bold, hypocritical, lustful, and stubborn class of dancers, both in city and country who openly defy Christ, His Church and His ministers by their persistance in an evil which is undeniable, and which threatens to engulf modern society like a monstrous tidal wave, deluging the remotest confines of the land, and drowning every germ of religious and moral growth in the young.

Let our last words be addressed to all Christian young people. Do not suffer yourselves to be guided in your diversions by the world and its votaries, nor by the Mephistophelian modern dancing master, nor by your ever craving passions, but rather by the letter and spirit of self-denial taught by Christ. Lend a willing ear to the entreaties of your spiritual guides, who cry out in season and out of season against the vice of modern dancing, and be convinced that the conduct of those who indulge in the modern dances is not in accord with the teaching of Christ who died nailed to the cross, and shed the last drop of His most precious blood for your salvation.

No one should impugn our motive in writing this boldly against what we consider to be one of the greatest vices of modern times. We know

that there will be some who will disagree with us and will condemn us most roundly. They will say and that too with an appearance of truth, that round dancing in itself cannot be sinful. But we claim that on account of the close proximity of the sexes which the modern dances demand that waltzing and all other round dancing is a proximate occasion of sin, and as such should be avoided.

CONTENTS.

Page

Preface 5

To the Reader 7

Ancient and Scriptural Dances 10

Introduction of Modern Dances 12

Modern Dances 13

The Psychology of Dances 15

Sinful Modern Square Dances 21

Modern Dances Unknown to the Fathers of the Church and Ancient Theologians 23

Modern Dances Are Not Indifferent Actions 24

The Doctrine of the Fathers Condemns Modern Dances 25

Modern Theologians on the Question 29

The Authority of the Roman Catholic Church in General Against Modern Dances 33

The First and Second Baltimore Plenary Council Against Modern Dances 34

Testimony of the Laity 36

The Baltimore American 41

Mrs. Gen. Sherman's Two Letters 43

Refutation of Two Arguments Used in Defense of Modern Dances 50

Second Objection Refuted 55

Conclusion 58